DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 226 529 EC 151 006

AUTHOR Doering, Sandra
TITLE A Model Gifted Program for Lutheran Schools on Limited Budgets.
PUB DATE [82]
NOTE 38p.
PUB TYPE Guides - Non-Classroom Use (055)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Acceleration (Education); Curriculum Development; Demonstration Programs; Educational Methods; Educational Philosophy; Elementary Secondary Education; Enrichment; *Gifted; *Parochial Schools; *Program Development; *State Standards; *Talent; Talent Identification
IDENTIFIERS *Lutheran Schools; *Oklahoma

ABSTRACT

The paper provides information for Lutheran schools in Oklahoma attempting to design gifted programs in light of state accreditation requirements for such programs. The establishment of a committee for gifted programs is suggested as a first step. Formulating a philosophy about the program and the needs of students is the next step. Identification procedures include teacher observation, group and individual intelligence tests, and creativity tests. Teachers' attitudes and commitment play a vital part in the program's success. Curriculum options include vertical acceleration, horizontal enrichment, and grouping. Classroom organization approaches cover use of time, classroom noise level, and physical arrangements. Enrichment can be given in the classroom setting or through community, congregational and parental resources. Pullout activities, such as resource rooms and learning labs are other considerations. (CL)

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A MODEL GIFTED PROGRAM
FOR LUTHERAN SCHOOLS ON LIMITED BUDGETS

by

Sandra Doering

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION 1

1. THE COMMITTEE FOR GIFTED PROGRAMS. 4
2. ESTABLISHING A PHILOSOPHY OF GIFTED PROGRAMS . . . 6
3. IDENTIFYING GIFTED CHILDREN. 9
4. TEACHER ATTITUDES AND COMMITMENT 12
5. CURRICULUM PROVISIONS FOR GIFTED CHILDREN. 14
6. CLASSROOM ORGANIZATION 18
7. CLASSROOM ENRICHMENT 22
8. COMMUNITY HELPS. 24
9. PARENTAL RESOURCES 27
10. PULLOUT ACTIVITIES 28

CONCLUSION 29

FOOTNOTES. 31

APPENDIX 33

BIBLIOGRAPHY 34

INTRODUCTION

During the summer of 1981, the Oklahoma Legislature passed Senate Bill 214. This bill set forth the rules and regulations for gifted and talented programs in all Oklahoma accredited public and private schools. This then posed a unique problem for Oklahoma's Lutheran schools which also happen to be accredited by the state. They had to come up with a program for gifted students using what was already a tight budget. For all practical purposes, there really were no moneys allotted for the required new services.

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this study is to develop a model gifted program that Lutheran schools could use, given their limited and sometimes non-existent budgets. In doing this, the following questions arise:

1) How may the administrative framework be structured?
2) What teacher and parental attitudes should be fostered?
3) How can a gifted program be developed without adding new teachers?
4) What free materials can be obtained for gifted students' use?

5) What congregational and community resources can be drawn upon to develop the program?

Definitions

In the body of this paper, a few terms will be used that may need definition. This is to be certain that the reader understands the main thrust of the paper.

Gifted Students

The United States Department of Education in 1971 defined gifted and talented students as: "children or youth who have been identified at the preschool, elementary or secondary level as (1) possessing demonstrated or potential intellectual, creative or specific academic capability or talent in the performing or visual arts, and (2) needing differentiated education or services beyond those being provided by the regular school system to the average student in order to realize these potentialities."[1]

Each school district must then establish their own operational definition of a gifted student. It is not the intent of this paper to define in detail the concept of giftedness. That in itself is another area of research which seemingly has no exact conclusion. Every book and every person studied by this writer had a differing idea for defining "gifted student."

The government's definition seems to point toward providing services to students in the extreme upper 3 percent of the school population.[2]

Some guidelines for identifying the gifted student are presented later in this paper.

Gifted Programs

Gifted programs refer to planned learning experiences, structured or free-form, during the gifted child's school hours. The program is evaluated with the question, "Is this student using time and talents in a God-pleasing manner?" Even the term "gifted" indicates that what this child has is from God to care for and develop.

There is an even larger question: "Do our Lutheran schools provide programs that reflect proper stewardship of the time and talents of our gifted students?"

Limitations

This paper seeks to provide Lutheran schools a model for designing their own gifted programs. This study does not contain a step-by-step method for converting every classroom to better accomodate gifted students. Each classroom and each teacher are unique. The classroom teacher is the person responsible for evaluating the learning programs in use and for adapting the following ideas where appropriate.

1. THE COMMITTEE FOR GIFTED PROGRAMS

An initial step in establishing a program is the selection of a steering committee responsible for policies and procedures. The purpose of a steering committee for gifted programs is to provide direction to the teachers involved and to monitor events in the individual classrooms. This committee must be informed and current on state requirements and definitions in order to assure compliance from the local school.

The committee should be comprised of an administrator, regular classroom teachers, special teachers, if any, and parents interested in gifted education. Five to seven members affords a workable group. In most congregations, this committee would be responsible to the church's Board of Education.

This committee for gifted programs develops the philosophy and goals for the programs, reflecting the school's overall objectives for their students.

The scope of the committee's operations also includes drawing up the school's operational definition of giftedness and determining the identification process employed to find the target population. In doing so, the committee will have to contend with parents who desire their child to be in the gifted programs even when the child doesn't qualify. The presence of a clearly defined and established policy will do

much to alleviate the tensions. If the policy stipulates a trial period in the gifted programs, the criteria for discontinuation or admission must be clearly defined.

Local school board policies and definitions are valuable tools in establishing policy and procedure. The Lutheran schools desire to provide their students "something more" and yet attempt to remain within the requirements of the local school system. Students and parents must be confident that the student is receiving an education at least equal to, if not exceeding, that offered in the public systems. Identifying with the local systems also prevents any serious problems when the student is ready to transfer to a public school.

Finally, the committee for gifted programs provides general guidelines and ideas to the teachers about types of programs and activities which might be used to meet the needs of the students. This means that the committee is involved in review of available resources and methods.[3]

A steering committee for gifted programs, in that it deals with overall goals and policies, provides continuity for the education process and aids the student's transition from one teacher to the next.

A carryover function of the steering committee for gifted programs is that it provides a positive awareness of gifted students to the congregation and to the school population. The committee will help both the school and the congregation become acquainted with the gifted positively.

2. ESTABLISHING A PHILOSOPHY OF GIFTED PROGRAMS

The committee for gifted programs, as it draws together the goals and philosophy with which it will work, will take into account the uniqueness and the history of the congregation and the community it serves. The committee will illustrate the ways in which gifted programs relate to good stewardship of time and talents, for the students as well as the teachers.

In order to understand the differentiation present between the gifted programs and the normal curriculum, the committee must first understand the ways in which the needs of the gifted student differ from those of the average learner. These needs must be explored before any programs are set up.

"Fitting the program to the child" has become a popular statement in educational circles, and for just reason. For too long, educators have been trying to "fit the child to the program" without success. In all education, and especially in gifted education, the important thrust is to teach to the strengths and the weaknesses of the student. Doing so can make it possible to help each child gain a realistic concept of himself.[4] Seeing that not all students are alike then leads to believing that not all programs have to be alike.

Needs of Gifted Students

Many observers have been cataloguing the problems and needs of gifted students. Ernest L. Perlini has given educators a helpful list of ten areas of need in gifted students.

The gifted child needs opportunity for:

1) stimulation from the regular curriculum;
2) advanced skills;
3) independent thinking;
4) expression of creativity and originality;
5) productive accomplishments;
6) conceptual elaboration;
7) interchange with an intellectual environment;
8) stimulation from academically gifted peers;
9) acceptance from grade level peers; and
10) change from routine.[5]

In addition to these needs, many gifted children have poor work habits because they have never had to work hard to achieve the teacher's objectives. Being mentally gifted is not the same as being diligent.[6] Many gifted children need some structure in which to learn proper study habits and research skills. Gifted students, then, need the teacher to be a facilitator and a guide.

Another valuable resource for understanding the needs of the gifted students comes from the students themselves. They can be challenged to list their needs and interests as part of a process in which they work with the teacher to design their own curriculum.

A Statement of Philosophy

With an understanding of the need for gifted programs, the committee can begin to formulate a statement of philosophy. Sometimes viewed as a statement of purpose, this idea will be the core around which policies and methods can form. This writer knows the importance that each committee develop its own statement of philosophy. However, the following is offered as an example.

"The goal of every teacher and staff member of this school is to challenge each child to use the abilities God has given him or her as fully and as wisely as possible. In that not all students are alike, programs for the gifted and talented students shall be individualized for each child."

It is the function of the statement of philosophy to unite the goals of the committee with the goals of the school and the congregation. This philosophy will be apparent in the programs and attitudes of the committee and the teachers.

3. IDENTIFYING GIFTED CHILDREN

After setting a philosophy, the steering committee faces the task of identifying the gifted students to be served. The initial problem is selection of the method of identification to be used. This writer discovered almost as many means of identifying gifted students as there were of defining the concept of giftedness.

Most of the books and articles researched, however, seems to support the following methods.

Teacher observation. Allowing the teacher to identify the gifted student seems the most apparent method, but it has a flaw. Inaccuracy occurs as the teacher confuses a good "test-taker" or high achiever with a gifted student.

Group intelligence tests. Good screening devices are available, but should not be considered definitive. Many gifted students do not do well on the paper-and-pencil group test, and may thereby be overlooked.

Individual intelligence tests. This writer sees this method as being superior to many others. The drawback will be the expense involved in administering and evaluating the tests. Schools on limited budgets would do well to ask the public school district offices for assistance. Many public schools will test private school students if asked.

Achievement tests. These tests can be used to help students identify their areas of strength. These designs are not always accurate, though, for underachievers or for those students who are not good "test-takers."

Creativity tests. Due to the subjective area of testing, creativity tests are of uncertain validity and should be used with caution.[7]

Because of the limitations to be considered with each of the above methods, the committee may be insecure about the method to use in identifying gifted students. The key is to take each method as part of a whole, developing a composite system for identifying gifted students.

Two generally accepted statements about identifying the gifted student are: "Start early," and "Use many methods." Some educators point out that parent observations tend to be fairly accurate in the early years.[8]

Carol Epstein has cited a list of characteristics of gifted children which, while less objective, may provide a guideline for teacher observation.

The gifted child is:

1) inquisitive and curious;
2) interested in many things and finds independent pursuit of interests rewarding;
3) intensely motivated to know and understand;
4) a perfectionist, persevering to reach a goal;
5) highly sensitive;
6) a nonconformist and independent thinker;

7) possessed with a desire to be creative;

8) given the capacity for analytical and critical thinking, and for perceiving relationships;

9) self-sufficient; and

10) given a distinctive learning style.[9]

4. TEACHER ATTITUDES AND COMMITMENT

A large factor in the success of educational programs is the teacher. Administrators, parents, children and committees are important, but teacher attitudes and commitment to the program are crucial.

What type of person can best help the gifted child? The answer lies more in the area of the spiritual than the cognitive levels of the person. A true love of the Lord and His little creations we call children would have to be first on the list of qualifications. If the teacher doesn't have a need to nurture the children, any other qualifications are voided. The teacher cares for the children because God made them, loves them and wants them to develop fully.

The following is a list of traits that teachers who work with gifted children will exhibit. The teacher should:

1) have a lot of self-confidence;
2) be flexible and full of spontaneity and creativity;
3) have a "learner-centered" view of the classroom;
4) be a divergent - creative thinker;
5) be highly sensitive to the needs of the children;
6) have a strong preference for teaching the gifted;
7) have a keen sense of humor;
8) be mature and experienced;

9) be proficient in the subjects taught;

10) be a friend, not hiding behind a mask of authority;

11) be comfortable with creative processes;

12) be prepared for, not threatened by, questions beyond the teacher's ability to answer; and

13) be willing to invest in special training and/or workshops for gifted education.[10]

The task of working with these specially gifted children of God requires a special child of God. This teaching demands an attitude of respect for the children as well as respect for self. One who is uncomfortable with his own attitudes and abilities, who does not understand everything as a gift from God to be cared for and encouraged, will never be an effective teacher of the gifted. The teacher needs to be fully alive, well educated, curious and excited about learning.[11]

5. CURRICULUM PROVISIONS FOR GIFTED CHILDREN

"A program tailored for the gifted and talented but applied to the average causes frustration and failure in the average; conversely, a program designed for the average and made available for the gifted and talented restricts self-fulfillment for the gifted and talented and can also cause frustration and failure for the gifted."[12]

Herein lies the reason why Lutheran schools must provide a qualitative differentiated curriculum for their gifted students. More work, faster, just isn't enough. Increased take-home assignments and class busywork are not justified methods for meeting the needs of the gifted student. Learning experiences of a high quality are needed to allow the gifted student a chance to be stimulated, creative and productive. As stated earlier, these experiences should be structured to speak to the student's particular needs.

Several options are available for structuring a gifted program. Some of these programs fit in quite well with the boundaries of small budgets. The main ingredients in most of these options are the time and dedication of the teacher.

Vertical Acceleration

Sequentially organized subjects such as reading, math and science are good for vertical acceleration. Gifted

students have the capability to work in grade levels more advanced than their chronological age would indicate, and many times have the social and emotional development necessary. Conversely, demanding that the gifted student work only at the level of the chronological class may stunt their growth and maturity. The benefits of vertical acceleration seem to outweigh the negative aspects.[13]

Caution should be used in employing this method too frequently. A high-achiever might become very frustrated when rushed beyond capability and desire.

Horizontal Enrichment

Horizontal enrichment, covering the class's subject matter in greater depth, is a technique well used with history and literature. Learning is enhanced by different curriculum materials, individual instruction and an emphasis on higher mental processes.

Examples of horizontal enrichment include independent study, problem solving, and projects with real products. Many of these enrichment activities are good at helping the student acquire research skills and absorb a great deal of knowledge with comparatively little teaching time. Contracts between the teacher and the student as to the enrichment activity are a useful tool.[14]

Grouping

In this low-key approach to gifted education, the gifted students may not even be aware of their speciality because they don't stand out as much as in other methods.

All the gifted are grouped together within the regular classroom. If the school has more than one class in each grade, the gifted students are placed in the same classroom in a special group. The whole class works on the same materials, but the gifted group is encouraged to use creative processes and higher levels of thinking.[15]

The grouping approach allows the gifted students to provide social and intellectual feedback to one another. The gifted student needs to learn socialization and working with committees in order to develop smoothly. Teaching social skills may even be a part of the school day. Because of the need for social skills, gifted students should not be allowed to associate exclusively with adults.[16]

"An enriched, more normal, childlike program for the gifted is the best preventive measure against social isolation and apparent queerness of the gifted in later life."[17]

Pull-out

If a full-time or part-time teacher is available for special services, the gifted students can be pulled out of the classroom for work in a resource room. Pull-out is a form of horizontal enrichment.

Students in the resource room explore their own interests with the teacher as guide and facilitator. Research skills can be learned as the students delve into their own interest areas. Other possibilities for resource room activities include producing a play, doing a school newspaper, simulation gaming and designing specific science projects.[18]

It is possible to establish a pull-out program with volunteers who have expertise in one or more specific areas. These "mentors" could be available on certain days of the week to work with those children whose interests they can feed. With enough volunteer mentors, the resource room can be staffed on a fairly regular basis.

Guidance

Gifted children are often deeply sensitive and feel very strongly about different aspects of their lives. They need a time to discuss mutual problems and interests.[19] A rap session every day can provide a therapeutic effect as the gifted student discusses frustrations and successes with others. Small discussion groups lend themselves well to use during religion, reading, or literature classes.

Gifted students need interaction with all types of students. They need to feel that they belong. Negative behavior can occur when the gifted student is not accepted by their average classmates. Separation can escalate the hostility between the two groups. This writer strongly encourages enrichment in the classroom. The regular classroom can be a healthy "little society" in which gifted, talented, average and handicapped can train for real life.[20]

Enrichment in the classroom has the added advantage of being less expensive than other programs.

Special programs, such as pull-out, should only serve as a supplement to the classroom rather than being the entire program for gifted students.

6. CLASSROOM ORGANIZATION

The classroom teacher is the person responsible for organizing the room to accomodate all students, from the very slow learner to the highly gifted. This principle must be understood and supported by the administration. The following areas are part of the realm called organization.

Using Time Wisely

One of the complaints most heard in the school office is, "I don't have enough time to cover everything I'm supposed to cover!" This complaint concerns itself with curriculum. Trying to find ways to cover more than one subject at a time is not only a time saver, but helps the student to see that life isn't divided up into neat little compartments. Overlap and dovetailing enable the student to view the total picture of education and life in general.

For example, handwriting skills should be stressed in all subjects. Reading, especially in the upper grades, can be combined with science, social studies, history or language. Workbook pages or ditto sheets need not be done because they are there, but in order to reinforce a needed skill. Drill and review move out of the boring and into the tedious torture when they are not necessary.

The teacher needs to remember that not everyone has to cover all the same materials. Because each student can

learn in a different manner, there might be several reading series in use in the same classroom. Individuation means that differentiation of curriculum occurs even within the classroom.

This writer proposes that each child be presented a folder at the beginning of the day containing papers and projects the teacher and the student have agreed to work on. The burden of organizing and structuring falls to the teacher in the role of facilitator and guide, but the student might be allowed to select the enrichment activities personally. Student groupings occur at various times during the day to work on reading or math for needed skills. When not part of a group, the folder provides challenge and direction for the student, freeing the teacher to work where needed, perhaps with other groupings.

When the folder work is completed for the day, the student can be given free time to work in learning center activities throughout the room. Games, skill development wipe-off cards, coloring books, activity books, blocks and other manipilative activities, library books and puzzles for all levels are ideas for learning centers. The level of the classroom's students would dictate the manner of activities or learning centers made available.

The classroom should be rich in resources such as books, encyclopedias and equipment of all kinds. Art supplies are to be readily available. (Some practical ideas for obtaining this equipment are explored in "Community Helps.")

If a positive learning environment has been nurtured in the classroom, the students will be attracted to the centers designed for their levels. Proper work-study habits and research skills will aid the gifted, creative and motivated student to handle free time responsibly. Some students, especially those unsure of their skills or talents, will need more structured activities.

Classroom time organization should definitely include monthly individual conferences with each student. These conferences, perhaps ten to fifteen minutes long, are a time for deciding on new projects and for sharing feelings about school, home or the world of the student. The teacher and the student should have this time uninterruptedly in some quiet corner or out in the hall. It might even be possible to schedule this time during a long recess to allow other teachers to oversee the class.

The aim of this manner of classroom organization is to recognize individual differences as the norm. Everyone has their own thing to do. While there will be times when many students are doing the same papers at the same time, this will not happen all day, everyday.

Physical Arrangement

Differentiation of curriculum within the classroom demands that the room be arranged to create open spaces. These open spaces are to be used for movement exercises, and quiet study or reading. Some children do better work down on the floor than if sitting in a desk.

The underlying principle here again recognizes that students have different learning styles. Physically, this means that not all students learn best while sitting up in a rigid chair. Big pillows to lean on, a decorated packing crate, an old bathtub -- these might be just what a child needs to feel comfortably motivated to read or work.

The exception which proves the rule is the handwriting class. Legible graphic communication requires a physical situation in which the arm and hand can function smoothly. This writer stresses that good posture is factoral in easily understood handwriting.

Classroom Noise Level

Those who study group dynamics recognize the truth in the maxim, "My freedom to swing my arm stops where your nose begins." So it is with classroom noise levels. Noise is tolerable as long as it disturbs no one else.

If another classroom or student cannot function because of the students in a given room, the noise is too loud. If a reading group can't think or hear each other, the noise is too loud.

Some noise can be expected from shuffling around, or from young readers who haven't yet learned to "read in their heads," but concern for others will reduce unnecessary sound. Reminding students to think of others and challenging the students to test their skills in responsible work and use of time are additional ways for motivating a learning environment suitable for all.

7. CLASSROOM ENRICHMENT

The efforts by the classroom teacher to accomodate the differing learning styles and methods of the students extends also into lesson planning. Each unit of study is to be designed in such a way as to provide ample opportunity for each student to learn the subject material. Extended activities and problems are tailored to meet the needs of the student, incorporating the student's suggestions about the projects and areas to be studied.

Students themselves will gain planning skills as the teacher assists them in finding resources and in being conscious of offshoots to new areas of study. An alert teacher will be prepared to introduce new areas of exploration to the student.

The student's inner-directed motivation to learn is enhanced by inclusion in the decision-making process and by praise of completed projects. Both factors are included in providing enrichment activities for the classroom.

"In the mainstream environment you can't clearly define or separate the differentiated curriculum from the regular course of study."[21]

As has been stated before, this individualized enrichment form of education should be so much a part of the everyday course of study that it is viewed as the norm rather than the exception.

Numerous authors have compiled very helpful ideas on classroom enrichment and extended activities. (This writer's favorite author is excerpted in the Appendix.) Teacher's manuals and journals are replete with ideas, often including methods and costs involved. If no other resource is consulted, a teacher can gain many ideas from supply house catalogues and brochures.

If the teacher can get past the idea of having to expend vast quantities of work and instead concentrate on quality of time in the classroom, that teacher will discover plenty of time in which the gifted student can work on these enrichment activities.

8. COMMUNITY AND CONGREGATIONAL RESOURCES

In establishing gifted programs, the teacher and the committee learn to be aware of resources for enrichment and education. The truth becomes apparent: gifted programs do not require expensive equipment or mass quantities of highly technical materials. Extant materials and resources can be used more efficiently to meet the needs of the students.

Each classroom, though, experiences wear and tear on the facilities. The need for resources varies with student population and students' needs. Learning center activities go the way of all flesh and need to be replaced.

Lutheran schools have two support bases from which to draw needed resources. Like the public schools, they have the community in which they exist. But they also have the congregations available for exploration.

There are two types of resources that the community and congregation can supply a gifted program: materials and time.

Material Resources

Enterprising persons with but a minimal awareness of recycling will be able to benefit the gifted programs very much. What could be expensive equipment when bought new is very cheap when scrounged. Each community has a wealth of sources for classroom materials.

1) Telephone companies have old telephone poles, discarded hardware, cable spools and storage containers. Some local people might even set up a communications system in the classroom as a public relations service.
2) Electronic companies and warehouses have obsolete electronic parts that can be used.
3) Lumber and hardware stores and construction sites have more than the obvious pieces of wood in the scrap bin: old fencing, paints, bricks of odd patterns, rope and other treasures await.
4) Billboard companies throwaway signs that are great for bulletin boards or displays.
5) Agricultural schools, park departments, and even commercial nurseries may have plants to donate for science projects.
6) Meat packers or meat markets can provide spare parts for the anatomist or biologist in the classroom.[22]

Once students have been trained to always be on the lookout for hidden treasures (not a bad learning skill in itself), the supply of materials never runs out. Old storage rooms, warehouses and garages can hold a wealth of learning tools is only the time is taken to discover them.[23]

Advertising a need in the congregation's bulletin or newsletter often yields surprising results. Soon there may be more magazines or fruit jars than can be handled.

There is no reason for a classroom to be without resources and learning materials. Certainly the teacher, the committee, and the students can exercise the drive and imagination to secure more resources than necessary.

Talent and Time Resources

Many gifted programs hinge on the cooperation and aid of some community facilities and persons as part of the whole educational process. Teachers and committees alike may cultivate these resources carefully -- trying to get the best use for the longest available time.

Retirement communities are groupings of experts. Each of the people can do something well. In some cases, these experts have the desire and the talent necessary to act as a "mentor" for students who are ready for advanced skills. If most do not want to work with the whole class, many are willing to tutor one or two at a time in some specific skills.

Business facilities close to the school are excellent learning facilities. Stock exchanges, real estate offices, stores, hospitals, pharmacies and insurance companies are all off-site possibilities for the student who expresses an interest in the area.[24]

Community and congregational resources for materials and time are limited only by the imagination, which itself can be limitless.

9. PARENTAL RESOURCES

Parents can be a great help in a gifted program. If they are informed about the goals of the program, and agree with those goals, their investment in the program will aid student motivation and at-home reinforcement of learning patterns.

Parents can serve as mentors in their fields of interest. Some might even be able to function as teacher aides and become involved in the daily activities of the class.

As a major part of the student's life, parents are also an integral part of the educational system. They, as the students, should be kept informed about progress and events.

The teacher and committee can be in a serving role to the parents of gifted students. The parents need to learn how to deal with their children, how to appreciate them, and ways of coping with the possible feeling of being threatened. The responsibility of the teacher to the student extends itself in this case to the parent as well.

Involving the parents in planning and letting them know that they are a part of the educational team results in support for the program and encouragement for the people who are involved.

10. PULLOUT ACTIVITIES

Some Lutheran schools are able to provide resource rooms or learning labs for their gifted students. These facilities are to be used as supplements for the program, and cannot be considered as the total program. The resource room or learning lab will accomodate each student only perhaps an hour each week. This is why enrichment in the classroom needs to be the number one program.

The resource room or learning lab, however, does allow the student the opportunity to pursue selected interests more extensively. With volunteer mentors or learning lab teachers as guides and facilitators, the students can be introduced to subject areas not readily available in the classroom. As mentioned previously, newspapers, plays, extensive science projects and simulation games are some activities which lend themselves to resource room use.

Other areas to consider would be cartooning, astronomy, public opinion polling, cartography, cinematography, local history, fashion design, scripting, choreography, puppetry, consumer protection, furniture design, navigation, sculpture, and so forth.[25]

Resource rooms and learning labs stretch the imagination and creativity of the students. As they pursue their interests as much as possible, their motivation and excitement for learning will soar.

CONCLUSION

Summary

Lutheran schools have a unique opportunity to serve the needs of the total child. Not only can the physical and mental aspects of the student's development be nurtured and challenged, but the spiritual functions can also be supported and encouraged.

Education for the gifted student extends into every aspect of the student's life. Gifted and talented students are able to think more deeply and pursue abstractions farther than the average child. This bent toward philosophy allows a better grasp on moral development and an understanding of divine directions for his life and talents.

Lutheran teachers are to equip the students with the skills they need to use their God-given talents for the good of all. In order to work toward that goal, teachers must know themselves, understand the aims of gifted education and be keenly aware of the needs of the students in the classroom.

It is the teacher's responsibility to provide an environment conducive to different learning styles. This may include differentiated curricula or individual learning programs for each gifted student. This responsibility also implies that the teacher keep informed about tools for identifying the gifted and about opportunities for continuing

education.

Finally, the steering committee and the teachers involved in gifted education need to be alert for opportunities to involve community and congregational members.

Recommendations

This model should be used only as a starting point for discussion of gifted education in the local Lutheran school. Each congregational school must take the risk of investing their time and ideas into a gifted program if that program is to succeed in meeting the needs of the students. As those needs differ, so also will the needs and goals of a particular school vary.

While this model does not require large budgetary considerations, it demands time and commitment from the teachers and the steering committee. Teachers in Lutheran schools often serve as more than teacher. These added responsibilities reduce the amounts of extra time available to devote to a program such as this one. Administrations and committees must consider the time cost of gifted education. If the teachers are expected to use their time wisely and deliver the high quality programs that the students need, the teachers should be allowed to concentrate on education.

FOOTNOTES

[1]NAIS Academic Committee, "Teaching the Gifted and Talented in the Regular Classroom," (Boston: National Association of Independent Schools, 1978), p. 18. (ED166888)

[2]Ibid.

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[8]Carol B. Epstein, The Gifted and Talented-Programs That Work (Arlington, VA: National School Public Relations Association, 1979), p. 45-46.

[9]Ibid., p. 58.

[10]Ibid., p. 64-65.

[11]E. Paul Torrance, Gifted Children in the Classroom (New York: Macmillan and Co., 1965), p. 89.

[12]Frederick B. Tuttle and Laurence A. Becker, Program Design and Development for Gifted and Talented Students (Washington, D.C.: National Education Association of U.S. 1980), p. 78.

[13]Epstein, The Gifted and Talented-Programs That Work, p. 70-71.

[14]Ibid., p. 69.

[15]Ibid., p. 68-69.

[16]Hildreth, Educating Gifted Children, p. 197.

[17]Ibid.

[18]Epstein, The Gifted and Talented-Programs That Work, p. 69.

[19]Ibid., p. 71.

[20]NAIS Academic Committee, "Teaching the Gifted and Talented in the Regular Classroom," p. 19.

[21]Shirley Ritchie, "Project Ascent: Mainstreaming Gifted and Talented in Early Childhood," (Raleigh, N.C.: State Dept. of Public Instruction, 1978), p. 112.

[22]Barbara Clark, Growing Up Gifted (Columbus, OH: Charles E. Merrill, 1979), p. 154-155.

[23]Ibid., p. 155.

[24]Ibid.

[25]Joseph S. Renzulli and Linda H. Smith, "An Alternative Approach to Identifying and Programming Gifted and Talented Students," Gifted/Creative/Talented 15 (November/December 1980):5.

APPENDIX

In Teaching the Gifted and Talented in the Elementary Classroom, Mary J. Heimberger presents a delightful listing of ideas for extended activities in the classroom for gifted learners. The following are some excerpts.

Page 13. Have pupils make a Zany Zoo in which all the inhabitants are made from recycled materials such as boxes, cans, string, wire, etc. A sign accompanies each animal giving its name, habitat and favorite food. For example:

The Hippy Hoppamus

Lives in McDonald's parking lot.

Eats leftover hamburgers, French fries and discarded paper cups.

Page 29. Have pupils develop lists in which words are put into categories for later use in their writing. For example: color words; size words; mood words; action words; how, where and when words; etc.

Page 31. Have pupils write an All About Me Book. The book can include a self-portrait, a short autobiography, snapshots, original stories and poems and special lists of favorite foods, people, sports, vacation spots, and so on.

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